



Mr Simon Flowers
Carr Manor High School
Carr Manor Road
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS17 5DJ

9 June 2006

Dear Mr Flowers,

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I visited your school on 7 June 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I would particularly like to thank the students and the chair of governors for freely giving of their time.

Having considered carefully all the evidence presented by the school and the local authority together with evidence from Ofsted data, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress on the issues identified at the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection in November 2005 the school was asked to improve the standards attained particularly in Years 10 and 11, put more emphasis on how well students learn, meet the statutory requirements for information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education (RE) and improve attendance and punctuality.

Standards are rising and the school's evidence shows that this year, the proportion of students gaining 5 or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) passes graded A* to C is likely to rise. The modular results for science show that the subject is expected to perform considerably better this year than in 2005. The headteacher and senior managers have implemented a number of strategies to raise standards. These include targeting the achievement of particular groups of learners, such as black boys and higher attaining girls, and individual mentoring and support for all students. In addition, the in-depth tracking of students' progress through improved assessment procedures has produced tighter monitoring of how well each student is doing and enables swifter action to be taken. Considering the long-term nature of the issue of raising standards, progress to date has been satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning has been a major focus area for the school and the headteacher has successfully spearheaded many new initiatives to improve students' learning. There is a shared commitment to improvement and morale is high. The school has invested substantially in 'critical skills' training for staff. Managers have identified a clear impact of this, seen in improved questioning skills and clearer objectives for what is to be learned in lessons. Strategies to improve the consistency of marking are helping students better understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, although teachers are now more aware of the different ways students learn, the full impact of these initiatives has yet to be seen. Teachers still on occasions work harder than the students and do not always create enough opportunities for the students to take control of their own learning. Teachers value the strong support from the local authority (LA) adviser and evidence shows that students also have a much better understanding of what makes a good lesson. They know that the choice to opt in or out of learning does not exist anymore. Progress in this area has been satisfactory overall.

The curriculum has undergone a full review and from September 2006 will be radically different. Students will have a much-improved menu of academic and vocational courses. Statutory requirements for ICT and RE will be fully met and the structure of the school day will enable a much more flexible approach to learning. Through this innovative approach the school has ensured that the curriculum will better meet the needs of every student. Progress in this area has been good.

The school has worked very hard to improve attendance and punctuality and this is really paying off. A good system of rewards and sanctions has been established with incentives such as a prize draw encouraging students to attend regularly. Parents are beginning to cooperate by taking their children out of school for holidays less frequently than before. Staff escort students from the local shops to school each morning. Shopkeepers are playing their part by stopping the serving of students after a certain time in the morning. The school is also part of the DfES attendance project and is benefiting greatly from this. Current attendance is at 90.5%, which is a significant improvement and exceeds the target set by the local authority. Progress in this area has been good.

I am copying this letter to the chair of governors and the Director of Education Leeds. This letter will also be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mr Anthony Briggs
Additional Inspector